

Nathan Tilley and Tobias Schock
of Agrarian Ales
at Crossroads Farm in Coburg



PHOTO BY STANISŁAW SOŁTYS

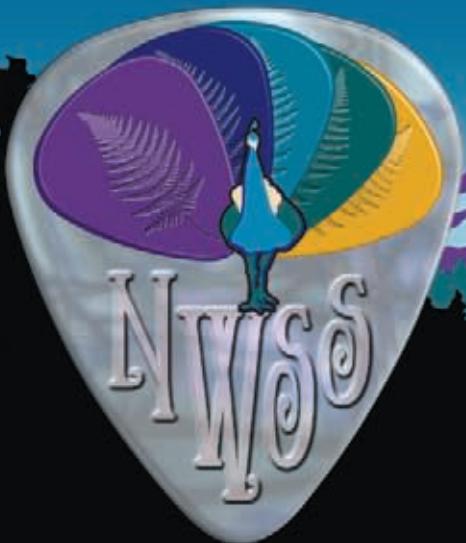
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BIER STEIN BOOMS

Hopping to a larger location BY SHANNON FINNELL

Talk about starting off strong: When The Bier Stein reopened at 16th and Willamette on Tax Day, it was inevitable that the beloved beer bar would have a good day, but owner Chip Hardy says that the new location has overwhelmingly exceeded expectations. "Our best day ever at the other location we doubled on our opening day, and by Friday it tripled," he says. "I was completely blown away by so many customers."

The Midtown building that's now home to The Bier Stein is roughly six times bigger than the old location, and seating has gone from 49 chairs to about 170. The old 10-door cooler has grown to 18 doors strong, the bar pours from 30 beers on tap instead of 12, and the parking lot increased to 37 spaces from six.

Other brew-fabulousness includes build-your-own taster flights and pitchers, which were introduced to prevent the lines from building up. On the artistic side, take a look upward to see beer-bottle-shaped light fixtures made by Daniel Water-Buffalo of Cornerstone Glass.

Rather than an old-style menu of beers on tap, the new Bier Stein has television screen display boards that show the kegs' fill levels in addition to the location of the brewery, ABV and IBU levels. But with lines stretching nearly to the door, Hardy says The Bier Stein will have to make some adjustments. "The display boards have been a really big hit other than with the people who can't read them," Hardy says, "so we're in the process right now of buying new televisions and reinstalling those." He's also ordered three additional cash registers and is planning on installing acoustic ceiling tiles to keep the noise down.

The "back bar," a six-tap bar behind the main seating area, is an area Hardy plans to rent out for birthday parties and corporate functions, and he also plans to host tap takeovers by breweries. "Having the extra space is going to allow us to do a whole bunch of things now that we couldn't do before just because we don't have the space limitations," he says.



PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

That includes food, too. While the menu hasn't changed yet, Hardy says that the new kitchen is about six times the size of the old one, complete with fryers, a grill and a very large prep kitchen. "We started with the same menu just because we knew we were going to be overwhelmed, and we didn't want to add a whole bunch of new things right off the bat," he says. Future plans include brewers' dinners and a revamped menu.

Starting in June or July, The Bier Stein will expand a little more, via the internet, and allow people in other states to purchase beer on the website. Nationally, 43 states have regulations that allow this sort of purchasing. Why only 43? "It's all about tax money and tax revenue," Hardy says. ■

The Bier Stein is open 11 am to midnight Monday through Saturday and noon to 10 pm Sunday at 1591 Willamette St., 485-2437 and thebierstein.com.

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'THERE'S A NEW BEER CULTURE ALL AROUND,' NATHAN TILLEY SAYS [ON TOP OF LADDER]. 'THERE ARE BEER DRINKERS WHO ARE AT A LEVEL WHERE THEY ARE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING NEW AND EXCITING AND IT'S NOT THE STANDARD LINE-UP.'



CHARCUTERIE AND FIELD BEER AVAILABLE AT COBURG TASTING ROOM



AGRARIAN GROWS A COVER CROP OF PENDLETON BARLEY, A VARIETY DEVELOPED BY OSU, ALONG HOP ROWS

PHOTOS BY TRASK BEDORTHA

THE FARMHOUSE BREWERY

Agrarian Ales redefines brewing in the 21st century BY ALEX NOTMAN



hen Agrarian Ales was planting its first rows of hops seven years ago, an unexpected visitor dropped by.

"An 85-year-old farmer stops his pickup and jumps out and has the biggest grin on his face I've ever seen," says Ben Tilley, one of the owners and brewers. The farmer told

Ben and co-owner-brewers Nathan Tilley and Tobias Schock that he used to pick hops by hand on that very field when he was a little boy.

Today, Agrarian's hops are also picked by hand, but that's not the only quality that makes the farmhouse brewery unique. From ingredients to distribution, Agrarian is bucking industry standards. Here are five reasons they stand out from the (six) pack:

Homegrown, organic hops

Agrarian not only grows its own tangy cones, the brewery grows 10 organic varieties, eight of which were developed at OSU in the past 30 years. Friends and family then handpick the hops during a harvest party during the last two weeks of August at the brewery on Crossroads Farm in Coburg.

"Nobody else is using hand-picked hops in all their beers. Nobody," Schock says.

"We have our hands in on the whole process," Nathan Tilley adds. "From the vines emerging from the ground to us putting the hop cones into the beer."

Yeast-Forward

"That third element, the yeast, is being dumbed down and swept under the rug," Ben Tilley says.

Because of yeast's historically bready and chalky quality, its flavor is rarely embraced and typically overshadowed by hops and malts. But Agrarian wants to be "yeast-forward" rather than following the industry norm of using a house yeast that all but disappears from the final product.

"There's such a range of flavor profiles that the yeast as a component of the beer can add," Ben Tilley says, comparing the range to that of chocolate or coffee.

Saison Flavors

A year or even four months from now, you will not be able to drink the same Ag ale that you sipped this spring. "We don't brew anything year-round," Schock says. "We're niche."

Their niche is the seasons, using the traditional French farmhouse ale — saison ("season" *en français*) — as the centerpiece of their brewery. Ben explains that the ale comes from the *saisonniers*, or Belgian farmhands, who used it as a source of nutrients and hydration. "Saison is really the style and the story of farm beer that exemplifies agrarian life," he says.

Agrarian also loves its versatility: strong or light, fruity or spicy, hoppy or malty, the saison can incorporate whatever is growing on the farm at the moment be it herbs or fruit. Seasonal, local produce is a theme found in all their pint glasses, from dandelions in the Dandy — a brown porter — to chili peppers and corn in the upcoming Cinco de Mayo release, Indigenous.

Grow(l)ing Distribution

Currently, locals can find Ag ales three ways: on tap at establishments like Wandering Goat, Bier Stein and at newcomers Party Downtown and First National Taphouse; at the Coburg farm tasting room (complete with cheeseplates, hula hoops and beautiful scenery); and at their "epic tasting room" at the Saturday Farmers Market beer garden. Further afield, Ag is on tap at Sprout! and the Corvallis Farmers Market.

Looking for something to take home? Forget bottles or cans. After the bill allowing wine and cider growler sales passed in the Legislature this spring, Ben Tilley says that growler fill stations — where beer, wine and cider can be bought in bulk on tap — are "going to start popping up really, really quick." Ag currently sells growlers (64 ounces) and mini growlers (32 ounces).

No IPA

Breathe, Eugene, breathe. Yes, you read right — Ag does not brew IPAs, but hear them out: "We love hops, don't get me wrong. I'm not an IPA hater, but from a brewery, small business standpoint, if we brew an IPA, we're competing against all the other IPAs," Schock says. "We can't compete with Total Domination and Watershed ... we brew 100 percent organic so we can't compete on that level of price."

Keep reading hop-heads, Agrarian has a peace offering: the Belgene. The hoppy, rotating saison is a hybrid of "Eugene-style" and Belgian style brewing. Take it from a lupulin lover, the Belgene is a refreshing, less-sleep-inducing-but-still-hoppy alternative to the IPA. ■

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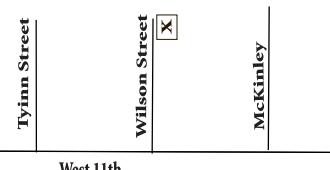
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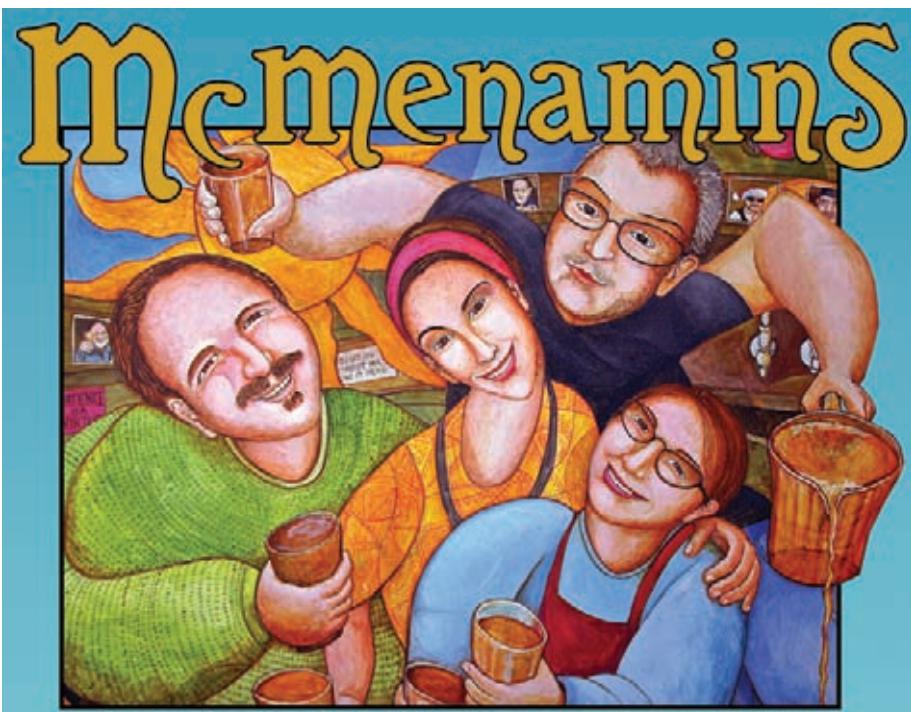
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PLANK TOWN BREWER STEVE VAN ROSSEM



PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

WALKING THE PLANK

Another awesome anchor in downtown Springfield **BY SHANNON FINNELL**

Head Brewer Steve van Rossem is still finishing the assembly of the brewing side of Plank Town Brewing Company, but the fledgling first brew, Bart's Best Bitter or B^3, is already a refined recipe.

Van Rossem, who is transitioning to Springfield's newest brewpub from Block 15 in Corvallis, brewed B^3 test batches up at Block 15, and he says that Plank Town will likely stick with the recipe. "It's made using British yeast, British malt and British hops," van Rossem says, "a classic-style British best bitter."

While van Rossem says he wanted to start with an English-style session beer because it's one of owner Bart Caridio's favorite styles, Caridio says he'll be happy to give van Rossem a fairly free rein of the brewery. "My vision for Plank Town's future brews is to let Steve have fun!" he says. "That's what I've been trying to do."

Next up for the brewery will be the Lil' Red Ryder, which uses British caramel rye and a mix-up of milder British hops and more citrus-like Northwest hops. A Bohemian-style pilsner, an English-style porter, a stout and bourbon-barrel beers are all on van Rossem's to-do list, but he says he'd like to get about six main recipes perfected and brewed before releasing them to the public. "I have a line-up," he says, "and I'm working with Bart and Curtis so we have styles that will complement the monthly specials."

Caridio, who has plenty of practice running successful pubs thanks to Sam Bond's and the Axe & Fiddle, says that he'd originally planned to include music like the other venues do, but Plank Town's early success, especially the busy dining room, changed his plans. "When we opened, the restaurant just ended up being so much nicer than I had envisioned to begin with," he says, so he decided to put off music for now to better serve the busy dining room.

Meanwhile, van Rossem is putting the finishing touches on his brewing system, special-ordered from Practical Fusion in Canby. "Brewing can be pretty intense labor," he says, so he's laying it out to be accessible without much climbing and stooping, "geezer" style. That's not to say it won't be visually appealing. An old dairy tank the Plank Towners found in Seattle will be part of the brewing aesthetic, which is now hidden by a temporary wall. Van Rossem says, "When everything's finished, the wall goes away and you get a chance to see the brewery while you eat." ■

Plank Town Brewing is open 11 am to 11 pm Monday through Thursday, 11 am to midnight Saturday and 11 am to 11 pm Sunday at 346 Main St., Spfd., 746-1890 and planktownbrewing.com.



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A poster for Eugene Beer Week 2013, held from May 4-11. The poster features a large, stylized graphic of a mountain range in shades of red and white. At the top left is the "EUGENE BEER WEEK" logo with the date "MAY 4-11 3RD ANNUAL 2013". To the right, the text "WWW.EUGENEBEERWEEK.ORG" is displayed above "MAY 4TH-11TH, 2013". Below the date, the words "CELEBRATING CRAFT BEER" and "CULTURE & COMMUNITY IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY" are written. To the left of the mountain, there are social media icons for Facebook and Twitter. At the bottom, a grid of logos for various sponsors is shown, including Western Beverage, Bigfoot Beverages, SeQuential Systems, Summit Bank, The Country Malt Group, Columbia Distributing, Oakshire Brewing, Hop Valley Brewing, Falling Sky Brewing, Plank Town Brewing Company, Rogue, Agrarian Brewing, Claim 52 Brewing, The Bier Stein Bottleshop & Pub, and 16 Tons.

SKY-HIGH ASPIRATIONS

Corvallis brewery builds up BY NICK POUST



Sky High Brewing, located in downtown Corvallis, currently lacks a kitchen, seats not even a fifth of its desired capacity and has a second-floor staircase leading straight into the ceiling a la the Winchester Mystery House, but Scott McFarland, his co-owners and brewer Laurence Livingston were too excited to wait. They didn't mind opening with a half-finished brewery in August 2012.

Getting into beer has long been McFarland's dream. "I did pizza for a number of years but always kind of had a hankering to get into the beer business," he says.

Influenced by the beers crafted during his time in Portland, he did just that, partnering with Brian Bovee and Mark O'Brien to construct what is already a hot spot despite the unfinished look. Because this is a brewery under construction, temporary and creative food options have satisfied its many customers. American Dream Pizza, McFarland's former employer, brings pizzas to your table, while customers can also devour "brew boxes" with an assortment of packaged snacks between sips of beer.

And, as eclectically flavorful as the beer is, those sips can easily turn into satisfying gulps. Envisioned by Livingston, with a few voices in his ear, porters, IPAs, stouts and anything else that comes to his mind are created with a unique twist.

The Five Beer Sampler, which can be purchased for \$6, is an eye-opening way to get introduced to Livingston's skill. There's the June-bug Wheat Ale, lemony and light; the Big Air XX IPA, a citrusy, hoppy beer; the Monk's Mana Honey Tripel, 10 percent ABV worth of Belgian malts, Corvallis wildflower honey and Crosby Farm hops with



SCOTT MCFARLAND OF SKY HIGH BREWING ON A KEG DELIVERY

PHOTO BY TRASK BEDORTHA

a strong, wine-like smoothness; the Panorama Porter, full of caramel and a dark malt pick-me-up; and the Mountainous Stout, equipped with not-so-subtle hints of chocolate, toffee, caramel and oatmeal flavor. And that's just a few beers concocted by Livingston.

"We come out with new beers all the time," McFarland says. And this revolving door of brews, he hopes, will only make the brewery that much more inviting.

And once the brewery approaches what McFarland and company originally drew up, it will be able to serve up to 300 people, instead of its current capacity of 45. This is no minor project. "Compared to what we have now, it's going to be a big step," he says.

That big step will allow customers to enjoy much more than a wide variety of palate-cleansing brews. "We will have traditional pub food," McFarland says, "but we're using the word flair. We're going to put some flair into it. We're going to be creative with it."

The desire to be unique doesn't stop with the food or the beer. Kegs of beer for delivery aren't simply driven around; they instead ride down the streets of Corvallis on a bike constructed by Lane Kagay, founder of CETMA Cargo and former Eugene resident.

"Corvallis is pretty flat, and so we were thinking, 'let's see if we can get a bike that will pull kegs around,'" McFarland says. "Eugene-made, baby." One more thing that makes this brewery so pleasing. ■

Sky High Brewing is open 4 to 10 pm Monday through Wednesday, 4 to 11 pm Thursday, 4 pm to midnight Friday and 2 pm to midnight Saturday at 207-3277 and skyhighbrewing.com.

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BREW SCHOLARS

Sasquatch Legacy Project pays tribute to a local giant **BY AMY SCHNEIDER**

Ninkasi's latest brew, crafted with the help of student brewers, is called Sasquatch Legacy Baltic Porter, but it's not a reference to Bigfoot. The beer pays tribute to Glen "Sasquatch" Falcolner, a longtime Eugene brewer with close ties to the brewing community. He died in a 2002 accident, but his passion for helping other brewers was too powerful to quench, and now his work lives on through the Glen Hay Falcolner Foundation and its scholarship program.

To carry on Falcolner's devotion to craft beers, Ninkasi co-founder Jamie Floyd and others in the brewing community started the Sasquatch Brew Fest, a beer festival dedicated to Pacific Northwest craft brewing. Most of the proceeds go toward the Glen Hay Falcolner Foundation, which provides scholarships for aspiring brewers and gives students an opportunity to deepen their brewing education.

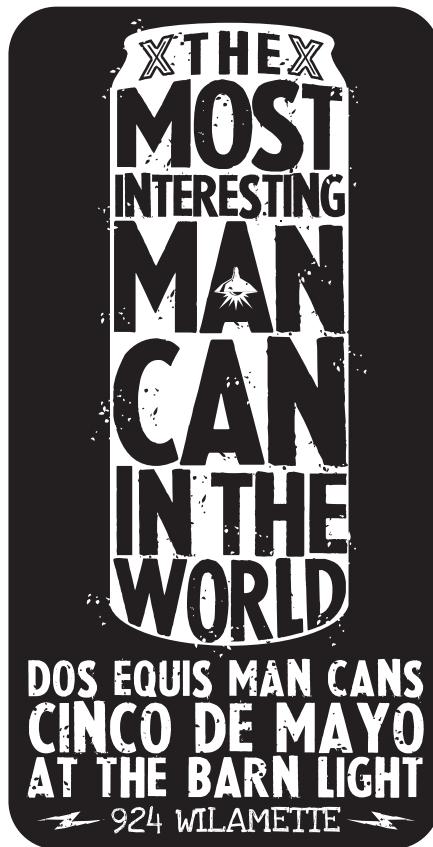
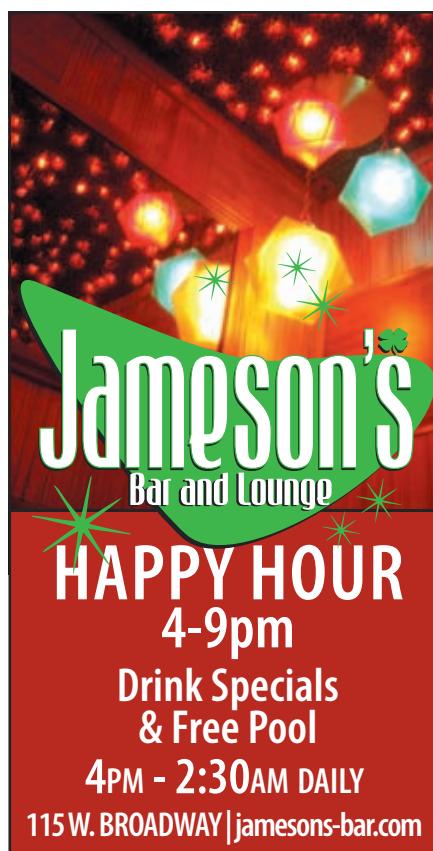
Out of this program sprang the Sasquatch Legacy Project, started by Walking Man Brewery. The project gives brewers-in-training a chance to collaborate with professional brewers in making a specialty beer. The project was passed on to Ninkasi last year, when Floyd and scholarship winners worked together to create their first Legacy brew, Sasquatch Legacy Wheat Wine.

Hosting the project for a second year, Ninkasi invited three 2012 scholarship recipients to work on the Sasquatch Legacy Baltic Porter, a style Ninkasi hasn't tried before. Brewed with Falcolner's preferred hops, this type of beer is described as "extra rich, malty and sweet."

Floyd says the student brewers get a hands-on look at a professional brewing environment by coming up with a recipe and spending time going through the entire facility. "There's a lot of camaraderie," Floyd says. "It's a chance to give back to the foundation, and it's a pleasure for me to get a chance to meet these folks."

Falcolner contributed to this camaraderie as head brewer of the Wild Duck Brewery, which at the time was one of the first long-standing brewpubs in Eugene. "I worked at Steelhead at the time, and I thought of him as great brewing leader," Floyd says. "He left a big mark on all of us." ■

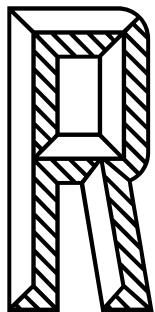
Sasquatch Legacy Baltic Porter will be released at the 2013 Sasquatch Brew Fest on May 4 at the Hilton. Proceeds go to the Glen Hay Falcolner Foundation.



ONE PERCENT FOR THE WATERSHED

You can give back with Oakshire's IPA

BY CAMILLA MORTENSEN



emember those old Olympia beer ads? "It's the water." When it comes to good beer, it really is the water, and that's why Oakshire Brewing has begun its "1% for Watershed" program, donating one percent of the profits from its Watershed IPA in the lower Willamette Valley to keep the watershed and its water clean and healthy. In 2013, the McKenzie River Trust (MRT) will receive the funds to continue its restoration and conservation work.

Water is the number one ingredient in beer, and the water from Eugene's McKenzie watershed is so pure that little to nothing has to be done to it before it's used in the brewing process — breweries in many other areas have to purify their water. The less treated the water, the better it tastes.

A watershed isn't just the water, it is the land and the water system and the linked living things within it (including human beer drinkers). Eugene's water, drawn from the McKenzie River, comes clean and cold from snow atop the Cascade Mountains, which filters down through the lava rocks, bubbles up in springs, then flows through forests.

Joe Moll of MRT says that because craft beer is such a social thing for home brewers, professionals and the beer drinkers themselves, he's seeing clean water and watershed conservation becoming "memes" within that culture.

With Oakshire's "1% for Watersheds" program, one percent of the creamy and bitter IPA proceeds will go to the MRT in 2013 — stemming from a commitment to save the watersheds that help make Oregon an ideal craft brew region, from the water itself to the all-important hops that grow here. Several years ago, the Eugene Water and Electric Board, the Forest Service, conservation groups and local breweries dreamed



PHOTO BY TRASK BEDDORTHA

up the idea of a "brewshed," in which stakeholders in Oregon's clean, pure water work together to protect that water from the effects of pesticides, industry, drugs, chemicals and everything else that could endanger it.

Brandi Ferguson, development manager for MRT, says support for keeping the watershed clean is spreading, just like Eugene's locally brewed beers. She says she heard from an MRT supporter in Washington DC, who told her that he can buy Watershed IPA at his local Whole Foods and support the trust from the East Coast.

"Step by step, beer by beer, conversation by conversation, voices for the river are returning," Moll says.

Now that Oakshire's new tasting room has opened across the street from Walking Goat in the Whiteaker, Eugeneans have even more convenient ways to drink for the watershed. Oakshire is hosting a "1% for Watersheds" party with McKenzie River Trust 5 to 8 pm Thursday, May 16, at the new tasting room, 221 Madison St. ■

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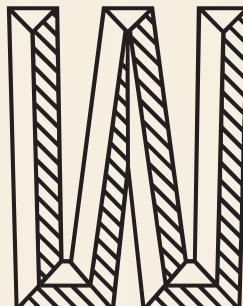
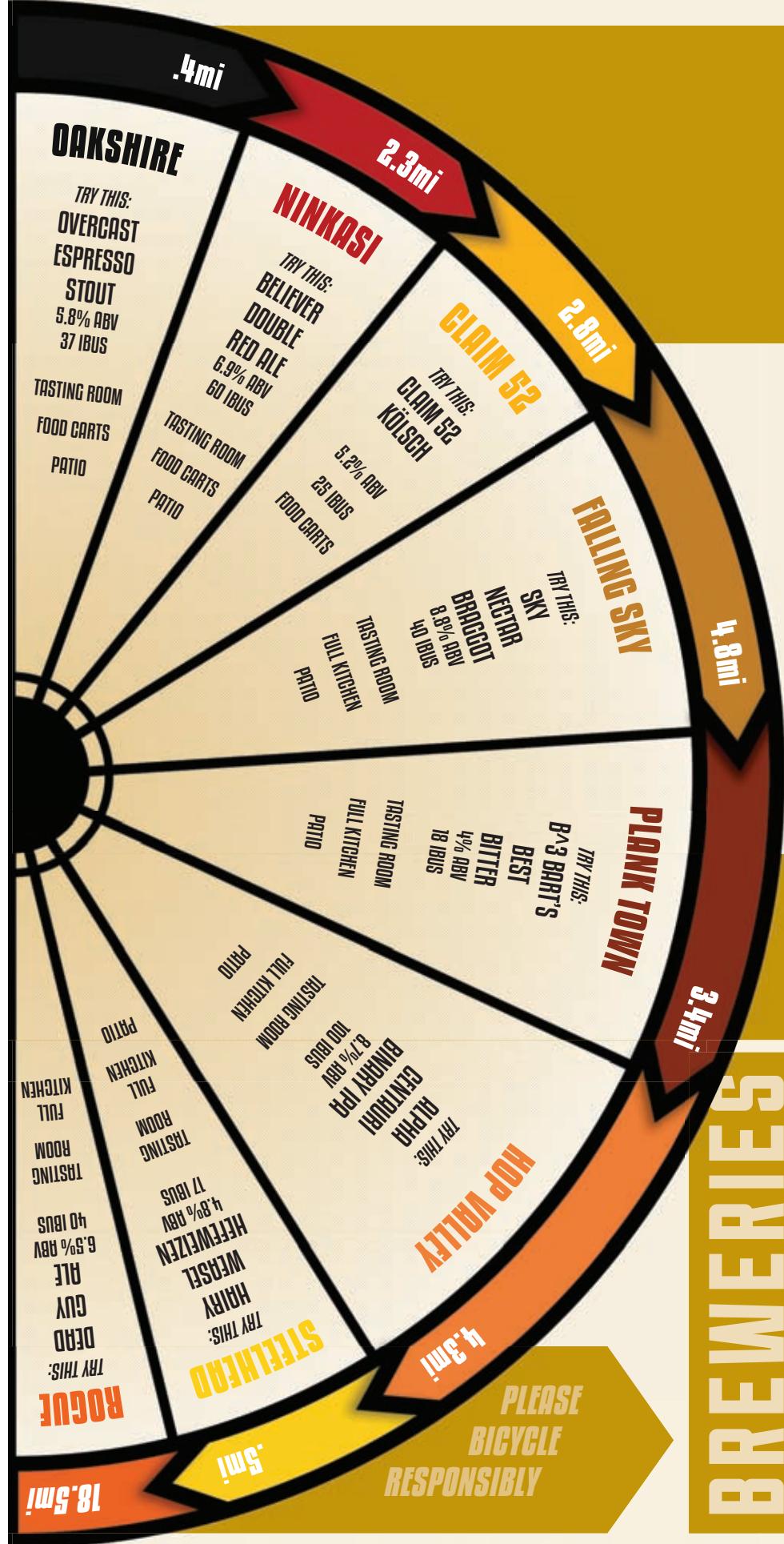
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Eugene a Go-Go is Eugene's online hub for arts, culture and nightlife.

BIKE FOR BEERS

WORDS BY SHANNON FINNELL • DESIGN BY SARAH DECKER



Whether you're a tour guide for out-of-town friends during Eugene Beer Week or you just want to soak up some sun while enjoying a few brews, a self-guided bike tour of breweries is an entertaining way to get immersed in the feel of Eugene and Springfield.

Explore Oakshire's new Whiteaker tasting room, head to local brewing titan Ninkasi, check out Claim 52's growler-based brewery on Fridays, try the ever-changing taps at Falling Sky, see Springfield bloom at Plank Town and reach its outer limits at Hop Valley. On the way back to downtown, meet Eugene brewing history at Steelhead and discover the outpost of a big Newport brewery at Rogue. Need this all mapped out? Use the QR code or tiny URL below to download our directions.

Sticking to one beer per tasting room and riding between locales is a sensible way to keep under the legal limit, which is the same for cycling and driving. But unless you were born with two livers, biking a few spokes of this map at a time might be best! ■

Check out our Google map for more detailed information on your ride

wkly.ws/1gq



OAKSHIRE BREWING

221 MADISON ST • EUGENE
(541) 688-4555 • OAKBREW.COM

NINKASI BREWING CO.

272 VAN BUREN ST • EUGENE
(541) 344-2739 • NINKASIBREWING.COM

CLAIM 52 BREWING

1030 TYNN ST • EUGENE • WKLY.WS/1GP

FALLING SKY BREWING

1334 OAK ALLEY • EUGENE
(541) 505-7096 • FALLINGSKYBREWING.COM

PLANK TOWN BREWING CO.

346 MAIN ST • SPRINGFIELD
(541) 746-1890 • PLANKTOWNBREWING.COM

HOP VALLEY BREWING CO.

980 KRUSE WAY • SPRINGFIELD
(541) 744-3330 • HOPVALLEYBREWING.COM

STEELHEAD BREWING CO.

199 E 5TH AVE • EUGENE
(541) 686-2739 • STEELHEADBREWERY.COM

ROGUE PUBLIC HOUSE

844 OLIVE ST • EUGENE
(541) 345-4155 • ROGUE.COM

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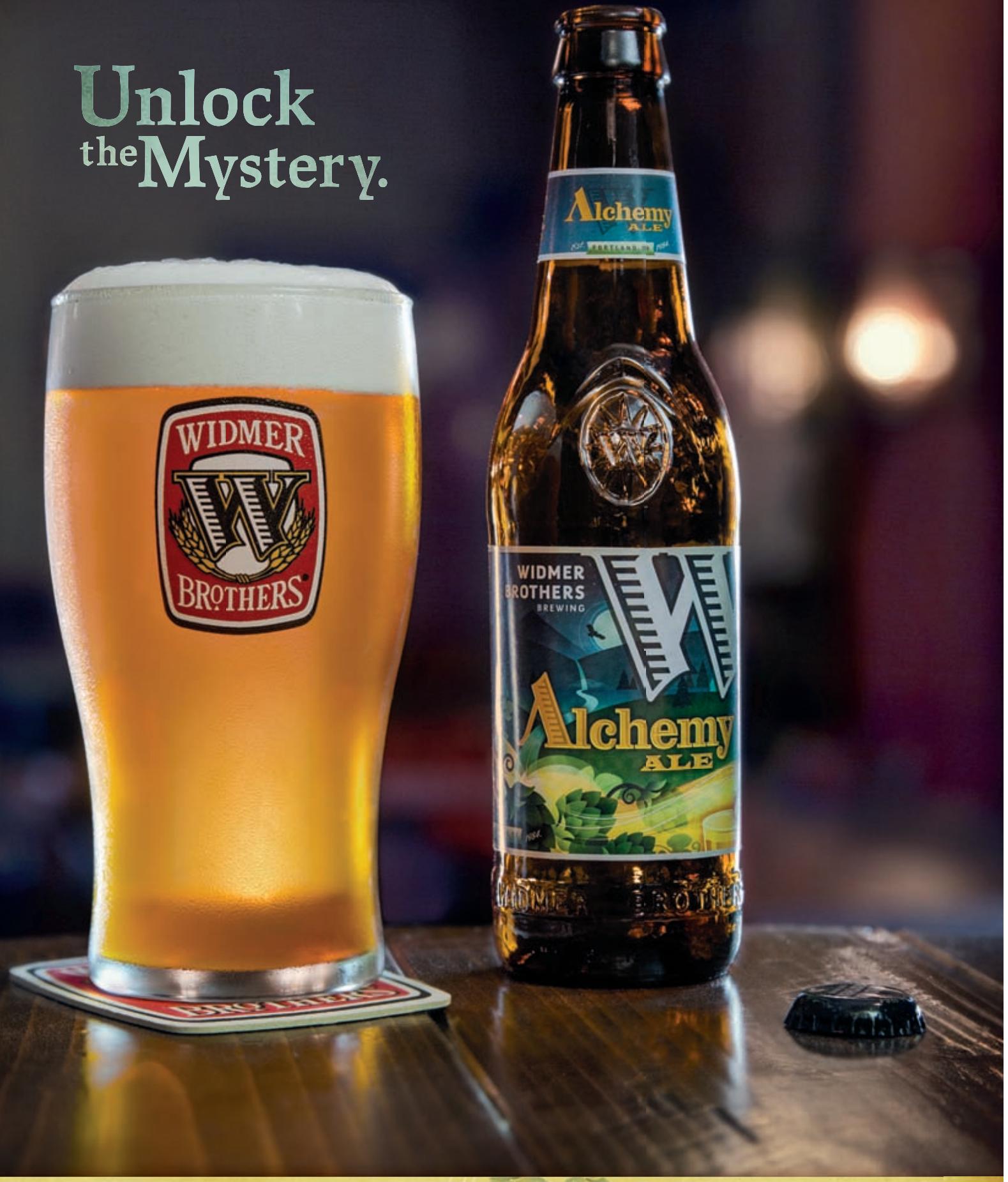


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